

CHILDREN'S ASPIRATIONAL *Bill of Rights*

In a fair and just society parents and family are primarily responsible for meeting their children's needs and for establishing values for their children. Governments should aspire to promote fundamental human rights, to value the dignity and worth of children, and promote social progress and better standards of life for children and families. *To that end:*

It is our aspiration that every child should enjoy basic childhood opportunities that include:

- A happy, safe, stable and enriching childhood;
- A place to call home;
- Healthy growth and development;
- A loving family, and if that child cannot be with his or her family, to be with another loving family;
- Significant family relationships;
- Adult care, guidance, and nurturance;
- Caregivers, educators, and other adults who understand and respect the child's different developmental stages and treat children with dignity and respect; and
- Adequate preparation for adulthood.

It is our aspiration that no child should lack certain fundamental and basic needs that include:

- Safe and adequate housing;
- Sufficient, balanced, and nutritious meals;
- Adequate clothing; and
- Access to quality physical and mental health care.

It is our aspiration that every child should enjoy the basic freedoms accorded to all people that include:

- Equal opportunities without regard to gender, race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, socio-economic status, nationality, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- Reasonable expectations of privacy;
- The opportunity to express herself or himself, and to be listened to;
- The opportunity for peaceful assembly; and
- Freedom from unreasonable government intrusion.

It is our aspiration that every child should be protected from:

- Physical, sexual, mental, and emotional abuse, exploitation and neglect; and
- Harassment and bullying.

It is our aspiration that every child should benefit from an education that includes:

- Quality early care and education that nurture physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development; and
- A quality and appropriate pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education that:
 - o teaches core skills in reading, math and science as well as diverse learning experiences;
 - o promotes self-esteem; critical thinking; discipline; and social, emotional, and character development;
 - o offers qualified, accessible, caring, and fair educators;
 - o makes quality educational curricula, materials and resources available;
 - o offers a healthy and active physical education to promote lifetime fitness;
 - o recognizes multiple methods for determining success and offers timely and appropriate assessments and interventions;

- o assures educational continuity to the extent possible when the child's life has been disrupted by relocations, divorce, or dependency issues; and
- o promotes appropriate and fair disciplinary practices and procedures which help advance educational purposes.

It is our aspiration that childhood should be a time for fun and enriching experiences that include:

- Play and access to age-appropriate recreational activities, programs, equipment, and materials;
- Enjoyment of art, music, drama, dance, literature and other creative activities; and
- Participation in activities that recognize and celebrate cultural identity and cultural diversification.

It is our aspiration that every child in an institutional setting or when placed out of his or her biological home should:

- Be safe;
- Have proper nutrition;
- Have access to quality health care;
- Live in a healthy and sanitary environment;
- Live in a non-threatening and non-violent environment;
- Have professional, well trained staff and caseworkers;
- Receive appropriate developmental and therapeutic services; and
- Have contact with parents, family, and significant persons unless not in the best interest of the child.

It is our aspiration that every child affected by the legal process should:

- Be informed that help is available;
- Have a guardian ad litem or adult advocate to further the child's best interest;
- Be informed of his or her rights, and have an assisting adult who is also informed of the child's rights;
- Have an appropriate explanation of the system into which he or she is being placed;
- Have an effective well resourced Juvenile Court that is supported by the community;
- Be accorded due process as a defendant, party, witness, or victim;
- Be provided with competent and consistent legal representation;
- Be informed promptly as to why he or she is being detained in a dependency, delinquency, or criminal proceeding;
- Have an opportunity to participate in the legal process, to express an opinion about matters concerning his or her life, and to have decision-makers take those opinions into consideration;
- Have access to his or her own records and to records that impact upon his or her interests;
- Have his or her confidentiality protected;
- Have a coordinated judicial system that minimizes multiple actions and provides either one decision-maker for each child or family or a coordinated approach among all the decision-makers; and
- Have a justice system that provides a timely and appropriate response at all levels, including intervention services or sanctions.

Section 2. By approval of this resolution, THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA does not create or confer any rights, entitlements or mandates.

No Private Right of Action: Nothing herein shall form the basis of a private right of action.

Entitlements not Created: Nothing herein shall be deemed to create a right or entitlement that does not otherwise exist at law.

No Violation of State or Federal Law: Nothing herein shall be construed in a manner which would violate the Constitutions or laws of the United States or of the State of Florida.